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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/718,054	11/20/2003	Dominik Schutz	TRW(ASG)6001-1	9303

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05/20/2005

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EXAMINER

ILAN, RUTH

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3616

DATE MAILED: 05/20/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/718,054

Applicant(s)

SCHUTZ ET AL.

Examiner

Ruth Ilan

Art Unit

3616

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 February 2005.
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4,6,7,10 and 11 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-4,6,7,10 and 11 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 20 November 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 10/022,676.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

1. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dancasius et al. (EP 1020332A2 and English language Abstract.) in view of Webber et al. (US 5,762,359.) Dancasius et al. (Figure 5 and col. 3 and 4, para [0018]) teaches a vehicle steering wheel including a skeleton (30), a gas bag module with a gas bag (14) with an opening edge (46) defining an inflation opening as well as including a flange (40) clamping the opening edge on the inside of the gas bag, bearing pins (40a) which directly engage the flange and which are attached (via sliding journal 20) to a part (16) stationarily mounted directly to the skeleton (as taught in the attached English language abstract.) Also taught is a resilient return element (38) and the axially movable gas bag module is coupled to the skeleton so as to by pressing against the module the horn (42) is actuated (as shown in Figure 5 and taught in para [0018].) Regarding claim 2, the bearing pins are attaches to the skeleton so as to move with the gas bag module (as shown in Figure 5, the bearing pins are clamped to the gas bag module by the connection between threaded portion 40a and the journal, and the journal slides in the sliding bearing (36.) Regarding claim 3, a contact (28) is mounted on the bearing pin. Regarding claim 4, the journal (20) acts as a lateral guidance, at least to the extent disclosed by the applicant (for instance in bore of 16.) Regarding claims 1, 6 and 7, the bearing pins (40a) are threaded, and include a nut (20) which is a cylindrical outer

Art Unit: 3616

surface and include a guide sleeve (36.) Regarding claim 10, the gas generator carrier (234) is clamped between the nut and the flange. Dancasius et al. fails to teach that the threaded pin 40a is permanently fixed in the flange. Webber et al teaches that it is known to permanently fix the bearing pins (110) to the flange (60) retainer of an air bag module (see col. 6, line 41) to allow for facile assembly of the components. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include a permanent connection between the bearing pins and the flange air bag retainer of Dancasius et al., as taught by Webber et al., in order to provide for easy installation, and mitigate the risk of losing the pins during the installation. Regarding claim 11, Dancasius et al. in view of Webber et al. is discussed above and teaches all elements of the claimed invention except does not specifically disclose the materials for the gas generator carrier. Please note that as broadly claimed the gas generator carrier of Dancasius et al. can be element 13, since the gas generator (11) is carried on this element via 234 and 28. The Examiner takes Official Notice that it is old and well known in the gas bag module art to use plastic as the material of construction for those portions of gas bag modules that are facing the occupant of the vehicle. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to use plastic for the gas bag carrier (13) of Dancasius et al. since it has been held to be within the general skill of a worker in the art to select a known material on the basis of its suitability for the intended use as a matter of obvious design choice. *In re Leshin*, 125 USPQ 416.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments filed 2/22/05 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. While the Examiner agrees that Dancasius et al. does not disclose a fixed bearing pin, such elements are very old and well known in the retainer art, as noted by the application of Webber et al. in the above rejection. Additionally, it is unclear why the Applicant asserts that the journal (20) is not a nut. It is noted that during the prosecution of the parent case, the Examiner obtained a translation of the paragraph of Dancasius et al. ([0018]) which clearly points out the threaded connection between the bearing pin and the journal. The copy of Dancasius that includes the translation was resubmitted to the Examiner by the Applicant as part of the IDS of the instant Application. This translation states that "By means of threaded pins 40a and by means of the guide journal 20, safety element 40, base plate 12, air bag 145 and holder 28 are connected to each other, e.g. screwed."

Conclusion

3. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Soderquist and Davidson et al. teach that is known to permanently connect bearing pins and air bag retainers.

4. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Art Unit: 3616

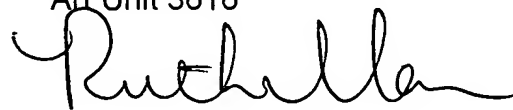
A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ruth Ilan whose telephone number is 571-272-6673. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on 571-272-6669. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Ruth Ilan
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3616


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